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Ministerial statement to the World Summit on Sustainable Development*

(Adopted by the Economic Commission for Europe Regional Ministerial Meeting for the Summit on 25 September 2001)

1. We, Ministers and heads of delegation of member States of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), met in Geneva on 24 and 25 September 2001 at the Regional Ministerial Meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable Development to review the progress made since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and to outline key policy issues, priorities and follow-up, in order to provide input to the preparatory process for the Summit, to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2002.

2. We reaffirm that our region has a major role to play and responsibilities in global efforts to achieve sustainable development by concrete actions. We will take measures to develop objectives that could include specific goals and targets to confront negative environmental, economic and social impacts of present development inside and outside the region. We recognize that different levels of economic development in countries of the region may require the application of different approaches and mechanisms to implement Agenda 21.[1]

3. We support the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. We reaffirm the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development[2] and our strong commitment to sustainable development, our support of the Rio process and our intention to strengthen the implementation of the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21 and other commitments made by the international community at Rio and at the special session of the United Nations General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21, held in 1997. This should effectively contribute to achieving the agreed international development goals and targets and to meeting the commitments of the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[3] by dealing with economic, social and environmental policies in a balanced and mutually reinforcing way for the benefit of present and future generations. We will promote the results of the United Nations summit conferences and processes of the past decade regarding critical social issues.

4. Since the special session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1997, we have focused our efforts on the overarching objectives of poverty eradication and sustainable production and consumption patterns. We look to the Summit to make further progress on

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these objectives. In view of these goals, related priorities of the ECE region for the Summit will include sustainable management and conservation of natural resources, environment and health, making globalization work for sustainable development, improving governance and democratic processes at all levels, education, science and technology. Financing for sustainable development will be a crucial cross-cutting issue.

5. We call for attendance and representation at the Summit at the highest political level.

I. The Summit: priority actions on global challenges

6. The new millennium presents us with major challenges and opportunities that require enhanced international cooperation and global solutions. Technology advancement and increased economic activity have produced unprecedented changes in the world. Many have benefited as diseases have been cured, the availability of education and information has improved and economic opportunity has increased. However, in many parts of the world, severe and widespread poverty persists. People are threatened by conflict, terrorism and violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The environment and the natural resource base that support life on earth continue to deteriorate at an alarming rate. Moreover, the scourge of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) is a worldwide challenge. All of this undermines the potential for sustainable development.

7. Addressing such challenges far exceeds the capacity of any individual State and also needs to be addressed effectively in a regional or global context. The Summit should therefore recommend effective action at all levels, taking into account the issues highlighted below. It should demonstrate the readiness of all actors — Governments and major groups — to continue to work together in a spirit of global partnership. A gender perspective should permeate the Summit process. We seek to launch in Johannesburg a concrete mechanism to carry forward our shared objectives for sustainable development. Countries in the region intend to further discuss how to deepen the dialogue for an enduring global understanding. We note the wish of the European Union (EU) and other countries to seek to achieve a "global deal".

A. Poverty eradication

8. We consider poverty eradication and economic and social development to be central to sustainable development. Better access to productive resources and effective public institutions are crucial for effective poverty eradication. Public and private investments in education, health and other basic social programmes are prerequisites of empowering the poor to integrate themselves into the market economy, and hence to contribute to and benefit from economic development. These measures are also crucial to combating HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases. Policies that promote a strong, dynamic, open and growing global economy and address environmental and social concerns and that result in widely sharing the benefits are key elements of poverty eradication and should address the needs and priorities of the poor.

9. The Summit should promote a better understanding of linkages between the environment, poverty, trade and human security so as to ensure a better integration of environmental protection and policies for poverty eradication and economic development. In the process leading up to the Johannesburg Summit, we will seek enhanced cooperation and solidarity with developing countries based on partnership and mutual responsibility for combating poverty and promoting sustainable development. We will take into account ongoing international processes in this area, in particular the process launched at the 1995 World Summit for Social Development. The international development targets as agreed in United Nations forums, in particular in the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,[4] adopted by the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries on 20 May 2001, will guide our actions. As a next step, the development goals need to be further operationalized and effective monitoring systems need to be set up. We expect that the International Conference on Financing for Development will produce clear strategies and actions, both from developed and from developing countries, on the mobilization of resources for meeting the development goals.

B. Sustainable management and conservation of the natural resource base

10. We recognize that sustainable management, use and conservation of natural resources are needed to reverse current trends in unsustainable consumption and production at the national and global levels. In this regard, we encourage countries to set goals on environmental protection, and improved eco-efficiency and resource productivity with a view to demonstrating tangible results. The Summit should develop specific initiatives, building on work undertaken since Rio, in areas such as freshwater, sanitation, oceans and seas (including coral reefs), coastal zones, mountains, land use, forests, biodiversity, energy, minerals and metals, and health and environment. The Summit should encourage sustainable management, use and conservation in the full range of resource sectors, both renewable and non-renewable.

11. We recognize that natural resources are of fundamental importance for the survival of many indigenous and local communities, including their cultural survival. Many indigenous and local communities are located in areas with few economic opportunities other than those presented by local natural resources.

12. Global demands and technological progress may increase the pressure to expand the use of natural resources in remote regions, such as the Arctic. States should assess the environmental, social and economic impacts of exploiting natural resources in environmentally fragile ecosystems, taking into account the latest research on the specific circumstances in these areas. The social needs and traditional livelihoods of indigenous and local communities as well as the existence of vast areas of pristine nature will have to be taken into account. In this context, special attention needs to be given to regions subject to high environmental pressure, such as the Arctic, as well as mountainous and coastal regions.

13. We support effective solutions for the sustainable management, use and conservation of natural resources, inter alia, through programmes of action, voluntary processes and mechanisms, legal instruments and cooperation with industry designed to take into account the views and interests of relevant stakeholders.

14. We will seek to find effective solutions to serious global and regional environmental problems through international and regional legal instruments, including multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). The Summit should urge countries to strengthen their commitment to MEAs. It should urge countries to fully meet their national commitments, such as limitation and reduction targets for greenhouse gas emissions. For the large majority of countries in the region, this means seeking the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol[5] to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[6] by 2002, with timely ratification processes, and with the broadest possible support of the international community, and welcoming the outcome of the second part of the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention held in Bonn, Germany, in July 2001. We will promote as appropriate the development of international agreements for the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources that integrate environmental, social and economic aspects.

15. The Summit should provide new impetus to the sustainable management, conservation and use of all types of forests, inter alia, within the plan of action of the United Nations Forum on Forests[7] as well as within the forest-related conventions, including the Convention on Biological Diversity,[8] the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa.[9] We welcome international efforts to address forest law enforcement and governance, including, inter alia, illegal logging and the associated illegal trade and corruption.

16. We recognize the essential role of sound management of chemicals for sustainable development and for the protection of human health and the environment. We will strive to ratify the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade as soon as possible. For many countries, this means by 2002. Furthermore, we stress the importance of intensified global cooperation in the field of chemical safety.

C. Making globalization work for sustainable development

17. We are determined to make globalization work for sustainable development benefiting all people and especially the world's poor. We are determined to integrate the poorest countries into the global economy. In the light of the uneven distribution of foreign direct investment (FDI) both among countries and among sectors, we will encourage environmentally and socially responsible investments, particularly in the least developed countries. Trade and investment can help to create a climate of trust and liberty and the economic wealth necessary to provide the resources needed to build and sustain support for improved social conditions and environmental protection around the world. In this regard, we will work towards widely sharing the benefits of globalization while taking account of challenges to social integration, environmental quality and cultural diversity. We encourage international financial institutions to continue to integrate human rights and environmental and social concerns into their work. We support the efforts of official export credit agencies to develop environmental guidelines and encourage sustainable development strategies.

18. The international trading system, including the World Trade Organization, must play an effective role in contributing to sustainable development. In this respect, we agree to enhance the mutually supportive role of MEAs and the international trading system. We support the launching of a new round of multilateral trade negotiations at the next Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, with sustainable development as an overarching objective. Participation in a new trade round is essential for countries in transition and developing countries, given their need to stimulate their economies, eradicate poverty and promote their integration into the multilateral trading system. Enhanced capacity and technical assistance are also vital if countries in transition and developing countries are to benefit from more open markets. We support the efforts of the poorest countries to integrate into the world economy and take advantage of trade and investment-based growth. We welcome recent initiatives to remove trade distortions and to give the least developed countries duty-free and quota-free market access. We urge all developed countries to follow suit, and encourage middle-income countries to improve market access conditions for the least developed countries.

19. We welcome the Global Compact initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. We strongly support the business and industry sector in developing partnerships and in taking measures in the areas of corporate responsibility, economic, social and environmental accountability, and exchange of best practices and technologies through various partnerships with other sectors. In this regard, we encourage workplace partnerships between business and trade unions to facilitate the engagement and participation of workers, in which the recognition of core labour standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO) should play a central role. We welcome the Global Reporting Initiative convened by the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (CERES), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) which seeks to induce companies to present comparable sets of data on environmental and social performance, the Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and other initiatives, particularly in the field of FDI.

20. New information and communication technologies (ICT) may offer possibilities for significant reductions in the use of materials, energy and transport, and potential new directions in environmental policy design, implementation and monitoring. We recognize the possibility of using ICT in developing countries to leapfrog and avoid unsustainable products and processes. We will work to facilitate the diffusion of these technologies to close the digital divide and make them affordable and reliable, and promote information security. In the context of using ICT in support of sustainable development strategies, we acknowledge the recently established United Nations ICT Task Force and the Digital Opportunity Task Force (DOT Force) initiative by the Group of Eight (G-8) major industrialized countries.

D. Improving governance and democratic processes at all levels

21. We believe that good governance, including respect for human rights, the rule of law, democracy and combating corruption, forms part of the necessary foundation for sustainable development in all

countries. Governments should do more to ensure the enactment and enforcement of domestic frameworks, including, inter alia, an adequate regulatory and judicial infrastructure, including laws related to property, and should open up the policy-making process to have more people and organizations become involved in shaping and delivering policy. Democratic institutions, transparency and meaningful public participation in decision-making will also contribute to creating the type of society in which all people have not only the opportunity to prosper but also the responsibility for the sustainable use of the natural resources on which they depend.

22. The Summit should initiate new efforts to improve partnerships with civil society and business and industry, and other groups in seeking sustainable solutions to development challenges. The Summit should encourage regional initiatives and processes, with the participation of major groups, on public access to environmental and other information relevant to sustainable development, public participation in decision-making and access to justice, and promote the implementation of principle 10 of the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. Governments in other regions may wish to consider acceding to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention), otherwise establishing domestic regimes providing for public access to information, participation in decision-making and access to justice, or utilizing the ECE Sofia Guidelines on Access to Environmental Information and Public Participation in Environmental Decision-Making.

23. We stress that the commitments and responsibilities of all stakeholders should also be reflected in strategies for sustainable development to be adopted at different levels by 2002 and should go immediately into implementation. These strategies should serve as mechanisms for interlinking social, economic and environmental objectives and issues, and cover a broad range of policy instruments.

24. We call for the development and implementation of "Local Agenda 21" strategies on sustainable development. These strategies should promote innovative local solutions, supporting partnerships of local people, community and voluntary organizations, consumer organizations and women and youth groups, indigenous people(s), minority groups, and local authorities and communities together with business and trade unions, as appropriate. We will facilitate the sharing of experience with existing Local Agendas 21 and the implementation of the Habitat Agenda[10] at the local level among countries.

25. We encourage increasing efforts to integrate sustainable development considerations in the decision-making processes within international financial institutions, the World Trade Organization, development cooperation organizations and other relevant bodies. We call upon the Summit to discuss ways of improving the institutional framework for sustainable development, including the future role, mandate and programme of work of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, and to examine the corresponding role of the United Nations regional commissions in the further implementation of Agenda 21. We acknowledge that both governance on sustainable development and international environmental governance may require implementation and coordination efforts at the regional level and will need a more coherent regional institutional framework. We urge international organizations, in particular the United Nations bodies and organizations, working on environmental and sustainable development issues at regional or national levels, to extend their consultations with non-governmental organizations and other major groups. We call upon the Summit to discuss ways and means to promote compliance with, and enforcement of, MEAs.

26. There is a need to improve the effectiveness of international environmental institutions, and strengthen the coordination between them. It is important, in particular, to provide UNEP with a stable, broadened, adequate and predictable financial base. We support the work undertaken following the adoption, on 9 February 2001, by the UNEP Governing Council of decision 21/21[11] to explore ways to strengthen international environmental governance. We look forward to the final recommendations of the UNEP Governing Council at its special session as an important contribution to the Summit preparations. We will collaborate with the international community and strengthen synergies between MEAs, where opportunities exist, inter alia, in such areas as scientific linkages, reporting, compliance, public participation and assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition in implementing these agreements.

E. Financing sustainable development

27. We recognize the primary role of domestic resources, as well as the role that trade liberalization and private financial flows, notably FDI, can play in generating resources for poverty eradication and sustainable development. These three sources of capital provide by far the greatest levels of financing for sustainable development today. Incentives for environmentally and socially responsible investments, particularly in the least developed countries, should be promoted. An important way to attract and mobilize these resources is to ensure an open and stable enabling environment. A system of liberalized trade and effective and efficient legislation will help mobilize domestic and foreign enterprises and encourage responsible and beneficial investment. Environmentally damaging subsidies should be reduced.

28. Discussions on financing sustainable development should build on deliberations taking place within the context of the United Nations Conference on Financing for Development. In order to mobilize resources and reach the international development targets agreed in United Nations forums, innovative sources of financing should be explored in cooperation with business and industry representatives. Financial and technical assistance will remain important for the promotion of sustainable development in developing countries and countries in transition. International assistance flows, including debt relief and official development assistance (ODA), should supplement domestic and private efforts towards sustainable development. They should help developing countries and countries in transition to build and develop the framework that they need to attract the sources of capital necessary for sustainable development. We encourage the international community to take the necessary action to reverse the downward trend in ODA. Most countries in the region agree that the international community should strive to reach the accepted United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) as soon as possible. In this regard, we welcome the recent outcome of the Gothenburg European Council, at which EU reaffirmed its commitment to reaching this target as soon as possible and to achieving concrete progress towards reaching this target before the Johannesburg Summit in 2002. We look forward to a substantial third replenishment of the financial resources of the Global Environment Facility, taking into account its role as a principal multilateral financial mechanism for the global environment.

29. ODA should take into account the extent of poverty in a recipient country, the commitment shown by Governments towards the goal of poverty eradication and the extent to which policies are directed at this goal. Donors should further improve the coordination of their assistance to developing countries and countries in transition in order to ensure the effective use of limited resources in close cooperation with these countries. A move from a project-focused approach to programme support should be encouraged if the institutional capacities of the recipient countries allow.

F. Education, science and technology for decision-making

30. We are deeply committed to enhancing scientific knowledge and to improving the processes of generating, sharing and using science for sustainable development both within the scientific community and among scientists, policy makers and the general public for more action-oriented interdisciplinary research with greater focus on the prevention and early identification of emerging problems and opportunities. The rapid development and all-pervasive presence of digital technology in the economy and society will call for special attention. The Summit should consider how to ensure that science, technology and traditional knowledge are incorporated into decision-making for sustainable development at all levels, and how relevant knowledge can be made available to developing countries and countries in transition. The Summit should address the precautionary approach, which is set forth in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and underlies a number of relevant multilateral agreements, in decision-making for sustainable development. We will expand scientific and technological cooperation to address new and emerging risks and challenges to human health and the environment, and promote broader technology transfer and capacity-building.

31. We agree to improve education systems and the design of learning programmes on sustainable development to increase the general understanding of how to implement and promote sustainable development in practice. This should include initiatives in fields such as education, science and partnerships

with business and industry and non-governmental stakeholders, and give special attention to curricula related to sustainable development. Education for sustainable development should encourage the development by individuals of a sense of individual and collective responsibility, and thereby changes in behaviour, where needed.

II. The Summit: Priority actions for the ECE region

32. We welcome the regional assessment report (ECE/AC.22/2001/3) on progress made in the implementation of Agenda 21, which has highlighted the diversity in our region and underscored major problems on the road to sustainable development in the region. Among the important issues, we highlight the following:

(a) The movement towards less resource-intensive and polluting industries, a growth in service sectors, and progress in eco-efficiency and cleaner production processes has resulted in less pollution and waste per unit of product produced and consumed in developed countries. However, in the region, total increases in production and consumption and growing road and air transport have resulted in increased environmental impacts and continued pressures on natural resources and ecosystems;

(b) Air and water pollution and land degradation are major environmental problems in the region. Climate change is beginning to have an impact, particularly in colder areas, and desertification is a continuing concern. Increasing pressures on ecosystems and natural resources and the loss of biodiversity are high concerns in the region. Chemical and bacteriological pollution undermines the health of people in parts of the region;

(c) Despite strong overall economic growth in the region, disparities in economic and social welfare, including unemployment and social exclusion, have increased and raise new concerns in some subregions, with several countries of south-eastern and eastern Europe and newly independent States experiencing sharp declines in living standards and widespread poverty and accompanying insecurity.

33. We take note of the conclusions on sustainable development of the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting of May 2001, the EU Strategy for Sustainable Development presented to the Gothenburg European Council in June 2001 and the results of other international meetings on sustainable development held recently in the region. We also welcome the statement of the Central Asian Countries' Ministers of Economy, Finances and Environment Protection (Almaty, Kazakhstan, 20 September 2001) and their commitment to mutual cooperation. We note their desire to develop and complement the Central Asian Agenda 21 and subregional cooperation on sustainable development, and, as a priority, develop a subregional strategy for the integrated management of water resources and transboundary watercourses. We underline the importance of all preparatory activities for the Summit, including those by major groups and, in this regard, take note of the views expressed at the United Nations Round Table of Eminent Persons for the Europe and North America region, held in June 2001 in Vail, Colorado (United States of America).

34. We acknowledge that regional environmental conventions, the "Environment for Europe" conferences, the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation, the OECD and ECE environmental performance review (EPR) programmes and other ministerial processes in the region should continue to play a significant role in developing the region in a sustainable way. We will continue to support national efforts and subregional and regional cooperation on sustainable development, which should be strengthened, inter alia, through EU, ECE, OECD, UNEP, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the international financial institutions and other international organizations.

35. We also take note of the progress made in the EU enlargement process, in the cooperation among central and east European countries and the newly independent States, and in the implementation of sustainable development strategies and programmes in the Alpine, Arctic, Baltic, Barents, Black Sea, Central Asian, Mediterranean, Nordic, North American and other subregions.

36. Sustainable development must be supported by a common regional approach of cross-sectoral issues and means of implementation, including cooperation. In this regard, we reaffirm the commitments undertaken by the Environment Ministers of the region at the fourth Pan-European Conference of Environment

Ministers, forming part of the "Environment for Europe" process (Aarhus, Denmark, 1998).

37. We will strengthen or develop policies to increase social cohesion, reduce unemployment, help tackle social inequality, facilitate adjustment to economic reform, and ensure food security, respect of human rights and access to social services, such as health care, taking into account gender-specific and intergenerational aspects in all policy measures. We will seek to ensure that social development targets and the policies of indigenous and local communities are integrated into sustainable development strategies.

38. As business and industry play a huge role within the economic and social system, they also have a special responsibility for ensuring environmentally friendly production methods, products and services, taking into consideration the environmental effects at all stages of the product life-cycle. We will promote the full integration of environmental and social objectives into economic and sectoral policies, plans and programmes, and see to it that relevant policies are designed to support new opportunities for economic development and to reverse those trends that threaten health and the environment. We will strive for changes in production and consumption patterns by also promoting, as appropriate, eco-design of products, eco-labelling, and other transparent, verifiable, truthful and non-discriminatory consumer information tools. Care should be taken, however, that this does not lead to disguised trade barriers, in particular for developing countries.

39. The pressures on renewable and non-renewable resources should not exceed the carrying capacity of the environment. We will work towards the decoupling of economic growth from environmental degradation, inter alia, through the removal of trade-distorting, environmentally harmful subsidies, increased market access to environmental goods and services, the use of various policy instruments for the internalization of external costs, the promotion and widespread use of environmental management systems and eco-procurement ("green" purchasing), and effective legislation and enforcement, as well as the further promotion of renewable energy, sustainably managed resources and cleaner production. We will strive to significantly increase the share of environmentally sound renewable energy in the total domestic primary energy supply and to assist in accelerating the development of energy-efficient technologies.

40. We will make further efforts to integrate environmental and health strategies and implement agreed targets focusing on issues such as ensuring food safety and the availability of freshwater, minimizing groundwater pollution, improving waste-water treatment and sanitation systems, managing effectively the risks associated with chemicals, and ensuring nuclear safety in the region. We will address the issue of living modified organisms. We will work within existing regional processes for the integration of transport, environment and health. Where appropriate, we encourage a shift from road to rail and water and from individual to public transport.

41. We will promote the integration of biodiversity concerns into land-use planning and management, and sectoral and pollution-control policies as an essential component of sustainable development. We will establish and maintain further ecological networks in all ecosystems, in particular the Pan-European Ecological Network. We will strengthen and revise, as appropriate, the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy by 2003. We will further promote the sustainable management and conservation of forests in Europe and actively contribute to the preparation of the fourth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (Vienna, April 2003).

42. We commit ourselves to implementing, through the relevant conventions, strategies for the sustainable management and protection of the seas of our region, especially with regard to pollution and marine biodiversity with a view to ensuring a sustainable development of the coastal zones.

43. We will strengthen our support to countries in transition in their efforts to promote economic growth, eradicate poverty and resolve environmental problems, and thus contribute to the reduction of structural causes of violent conflicts. Effective completion of structural adjustment programmes, enterprise restructuring, technological modernization, higher investments in productive sectors and infrastructure, better access to export markets and integration into the world economic and trade system, as well as substantive social reforms, are of the utmost importance for these countries if they are to achieve sustainable development. We encourage further reform of the regulatory framework and we will strengthen our support to countries with economies in transition in their efforts to strengthen good governance and democracy, including the adoption, reform and effective enforcement of legislation, the

improvement of judicial and administrative systems, the respect of human rights, and measures to combat corruption.

44. We reconfirm the importance of strategic environmental assessment for plans, programmes and policies, and we will consider health to be an integral part of this assessment. In this respect, we acknowledge the decision by the second meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context to develop a protocol to the Convention on strategic environmental assessment for adoption at the fifth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" to be held at Kiev in 2003.[12]

45. We will promote the application of the polluter pays principle, which is set forth in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and underlies a number of relevant multilateral agreements, in decision-making for sustainable development. Each country of the region should develop a civil liability regime for damage, including environmental damage, caused by hazardous activities. We will strive to develop effective procedures and mechanisms to further prevent and resolve transboundary environmental disputes and provide redress for environmental damage. We encourage interested countries to participate in the intergovernmental negotiation process aimed at adopting a legally binding instrument on civil liability for transboundary damage caused by hazardous activities, within the scope of both the ECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes[13] and the ECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents.

46. We commit ourselves to implementing and complying with all regional and subregional conventions and protocols relevant to the environment and sustainable development to which we are a party. In particular, we will work to bring into effect the Protocols on Heavy Metals and on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution[14] as soon as possible, and underline the importance of this Convention's Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone. We offer to share the experience gained in developing and implementing regional environmental agreements with other regions. We will strive to increase our support to countries in transition and developing countries for their participation in the work of MEAs. We welcome the imminent entry into force of the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, and encourage those who wish to accede to it to do so as soon as possible.

III. Review of progress

47. The Summit should also address the future review of the implementation of sustainable development at regional level. We confirm our intention to hold the next comprehensive review of progress in the implementation of priority actions identified in the present statement at the latest in 2011 at a regional ministerial meeting. Indicators for sustainable development could be very useful in this regard. We welcome the ongoing efforts of Governments, non-governmental organizations and others to develop sustainable development indicators. We also welcome the ongoing efforts of OECD to develop an agreed core set of indicators for sustainable development and look forward to the report on the progress of the process in 2002. We urge the Summit to consider the progress made in the work programme of the Commission on Sustainable Development on sustainable development indicators with a view to the further development and use of a common set of indicators.

Notes

[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[2] Ibid., annex I.

[3] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

[4] A/CONF.191/11.

[5] FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3, annex.

[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[7] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 22* (E/2001/42/Rev.1), part two, chap. I, sect. B, resolution 1/2, annex.

[8] See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

[9] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

[10] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3-14 June 1996* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.IV.6), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[11] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/56/25), annex.

[12] See ECE/MP.EIA/4, annex IX, decision II/9, para. 1.

[13] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1936, No. 33207.

[14] See ECE, *1979 Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.II.E.24). Also United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1302, No. 21623.